TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

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Special Problems Inherent in the Structure of Rural Society in the United States*

HENRY S. RANDOLPH

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- "Rural life in the United States is not static or even complacent, but rather moving, changing, and dynamic in the national life," writes Henry S. Randolph, chairman of the National Council's Department of Town and Country Church and director of Rural Church Work for the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Page 1.
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No. 122
February, 1957

• Rural society in the United States is undergoing radical changes. The horse, fifty years ago, was our mode of local transportation. He was the motive power on our farms. He was the king beast of the farm. But he no longer holds this enviable position. He has been outmoded by the automobile in transportation, and the farm tractor in agriculture. This transformation represents a rural revolution in the United States.

This revolution has been facilitated by the rapid development of primary highways and good, year-round farm-to-market roads throughout the country. In the horse age, many of our rural people were isolated, but this is no longer true. They are now living in relatively large geographical communities.

This situation has been greatly intensified by the rapid extension of rural electrification and rural telephones. The telephone has made many new neighbors of families living farther away, thus enlarging the neighborhood basis of living. Rural electrification has brought to the farmer many of the advantages of city living, such as better sanitation, better preserved foods, and consequently better health. It has also lessened the amount of farm drudgery. Moreover, it has made possible the widespread use of radio and television, which connects the farmer directly to the cultural, political, social, and industrial events and problems of the entire world.

Advances in agricultural technology in the breeding of livestock, cereals, grasses, and fibers; and the development of new methods of soil conservation and management; also the invention and manufacture of new and modern labor-saving machines, have resulted in tremendous change and increased tempo in rural behavior.

Population Mobility

The farm families of the United States have long supplied the cities with people, but this movement has greatly accelerated since World War II. In 1954 we had 4,782,000 farms in the United States. This is 600,000 less than we had in 1950. This decline took place in every state except Florida, and in all except 180 counties of the 3,067 counties in the United States. In New York State in 1950 more than three in every four employed males 14 years of age and over who lived in rural territory worked at an occupation other than farming.

This reduction of farms, farm operators, and laborers means that many of our former farmers have found it necessary to find non-farm employment. Fortunately for these people, our expanding industries have been able to absorb this rural

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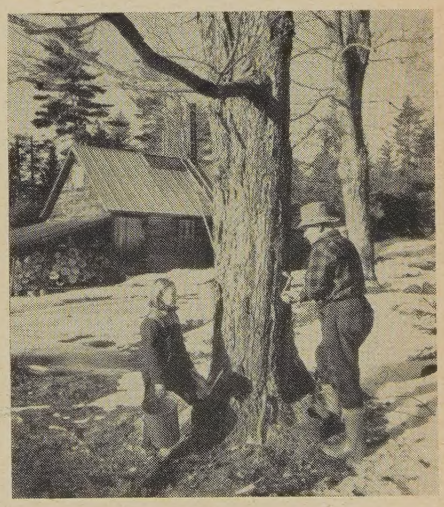

Photo by A. Devaney, N.Y.

* From an address given at the second International Conference on the Church and Rural Life, Chateau de Bossey, Celigny, Switzerland, August 1956.

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migration. However, this movement of the population is only one aspect of the picture. The majority of our rural migration is composed of youth, just entering employment age. With the rural youth goes considerable wealth from the land to which he has made very little, if any contribution. This wealth is in terms of the cost to the family of his rearing, cost of his education, and his inheritance from the family estate. Wealth created on the land is thus given to the city. This is a form of rural economic erosion.

The Church and Other Institutions

I have tried to present rural life in the United States not as being static, or even complacent, but rather moving, changing, and dynamic in the national life. Such a dynamic society does not provide favorable soil for the growth of an institution which is bound by an ancient theology or historical ceremony or tradition which isolates itself from the current social process.

The draining of the youth from the land leaves the administration of the rural institutions in the hands of older, conservative and less adventuresome people. In many instances, institutional progress become slow and ineffective, and fails to keep pace with social needs.

Church leadership in rural United States has had to learn and fully demonstrate that the total life of the human community, social, economic, recreational, and cultural, must be reckoned with, if we are to build an enduring Church. There is nothing whatsoever irrelevant to the spiritual life. The Church's program has had to be brought in line with the movement and progress of our times. It, too, must be dynamic. Church buildings and equipment are in the process of being streamlined to accommodate new program emphases, such as Christian education, fellowship, recreation, and social action.

There are fewer people available in the farm areas to maintain and support their institutions such as churches and schools. In some instances they are unable to carry on a vital program, and sometimes, none at all.

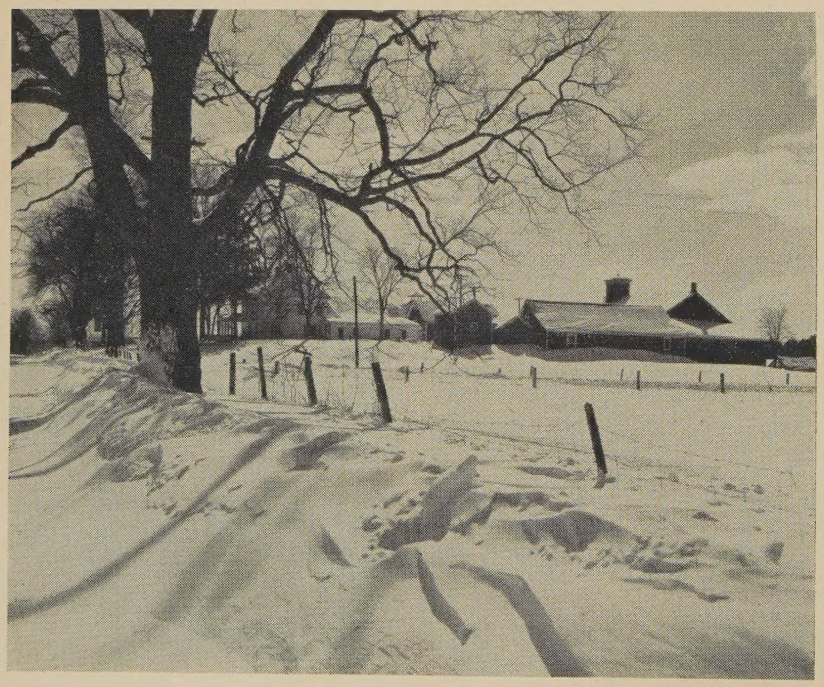
In many farm areas of the United States there are closed and unused church buildings. There is not a sufficient number of people left in these areas to keep all their churches active. In many instances the cost of maintaining such institutions has been a contributing factor to their decline. Salaries and expenses of professional workers such as ministers have greatly increased. It is obvious that, if any rural institution is to survive in the United States, except in the more densely populated areas where many of the people are non-farm, it must serve a much larger geographical area than formerly. The rural school in many states has become a consolidated or area school serving many square miles, taking the place of many small, inadequate, neighborhood schools.

In some of these areas the Church has used the larger parish type of organization as a means of conserving the churches and making them vital in their neighborhoods. This type of organization is where two or more ministers, with specialized abilities such as preaching, Christian education, music and youth work serve a parish. Such a parish is administered through a parish council composed of lay persons representing the local churches and the ministers of the parish. Such a program has demonstrated its worth in building vital churches out of erstwhile dying churches.

Rural Non-Farm Society

Although the population in rural farm society in the United States has been declining, the total rural population has been increasing due to the rapid increase in the non-farm rural population. We have two different kinds of non-farm rural people in the American population: the agricultural non-farm, and the non-agricultural rural.

Historically, many towns throughout the United States have been service towns for farm people. The residents of these towns live by servicing farm people. They sell to the farmer household necessities, farm machinery, tools, seeds, fertilizers, gasoline, oil, livestock, and even farms. The professional people in these towns, such as bankers, doctors, teachers, lawyers, agricultural and home demonstration agents are there primarily to serve the farm population. This segment of the nation's population is steadily increas-



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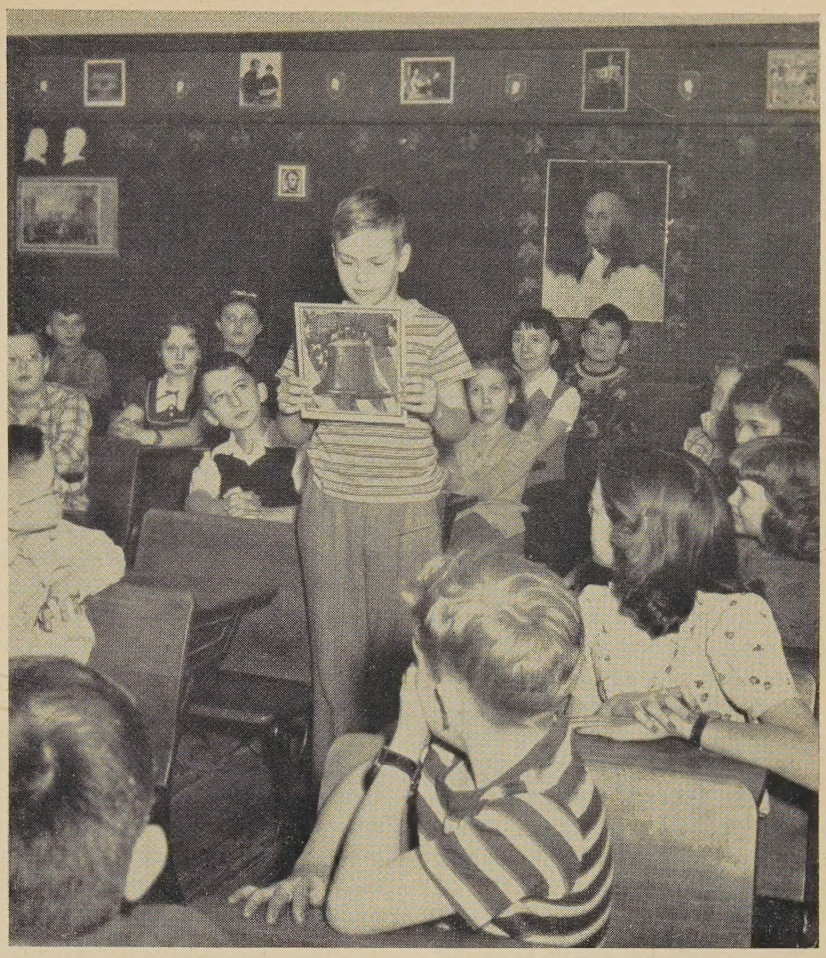
ing due to the increased demand made upon it for new and more commodities and services.

The non-agricultural segment of rural population is growing rapidly over into the surrounding country side, requiring vast new housing developments and service facilities. In 1954, 69 per cent of the building permits issued in the United States were for construction outside the cities, and only 31 per cent were for construction in central cities. New rural housing, highways and modern transportation facilities make it possible for people to work in town and live outside the city, in what we call "urban fringe" and commute to their work. We have a vast population that is rural in residence but urban in occupation.

Many of these people prefer to live in the country because of the open space, fresh air, home gardens, country living, and good neighbors. These people come from everywhere, with a great diversity of social and religious backgrounds. For the most part, they have adequate income so that they can live well. Many are buying their own homes by monthly installments. They are likely to have from two to four children. They are usually more liberal and aggressive than their farmer neighbors, who have always lived in the community.



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Industrial decentralization is making rapid progress. Cotton mills have moved from the industrial centers of New England into the cotton fields of the South to be nearer their raw materials, to get cheaper labor, and to pay lower taxes. Rayon and paper mills have moved into the heart of the southern mountains for similar reasons. Likewise throughout the nation industries including national defense plants have been moving out to the countryside. The movement of industries to the country has been accompanied by new rural shopping centers and retail service, and distributing units. This has provided employment for many people who left nearby farms and part-time farmers who needed other employment to supplement their farm income.

The American economy was founded upon the worth and dignity of the individual person. From the very beginning he was given the utmost freedom to engage in any enterprise he desired. So long as we had unlimited frontiers no one was seriously hurt as individuals appropriated and dissipated the nation's resources. But there came a time when there was no more free land for the taking, all the desirable mineral and timber resources had some owner's name stamped upon them in the record of the court. Later, even water was owned under a title. When this stage was reached, competition began for the possession of land, minerals, forests, water, man against man, brother against brother. Thus, individualism became more prominent in rural American economy.

However, in the early part of the century the Federal government took active measures to control ruthless individualism in the interest of the welfare of anti-trust laws, barring large monopolies in business and industry. Other measures were taken in the interest of the conservation of the nation's natural resources. In more recent years economic controls even in agriculture have become quite common.

Nevertheless there is still a vigorous competitive spirit and activity in industry and business, each trying to outdo the other. This is reflected in the highpowered advertising with which we are constantly bombarded through every possible medium of communication. This philosophy of private enterprise has had its effect upon the development of American institutions. This shows up as vigorously in the church life as anywhere else.

Over against American free competition in rural economy there is

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developing a very powerful cooperative program. This consists of credit unions, farmers consumers cooperatives, farmers producers and marketing cooperatives, farmers cooperative insurance and many others. The cooperative movement has become one of the fastest growing enterprises in our country. Many types of farmer cooperatives are operating in every state and territorial possession of the United States.

Rural America is heavily encumbered with organizations and activities of all sorts, both local and national, political, fraternal, farm organizations, garden clubs, youth groups and cultural clubs such as music, art, dance and drama. Then we have our church and religious organizations. These all compete for the time and support of rural people. Of necessity, social organizations in the rural community are beginning to develop cooperative patterns. In communities with many organizations, councils have been formed to plan programs and projects supported by all.

Many of our rural communities were over-churched before our rural migration to the cities had begun, resulting in strong competition for the attention and support of the people in the community. Now that there are fewer people to finance and support the church's program in such communities, the churches have lost the position of power and influence they once held in the community. But the National Council of Churches has brought into cooperation thirty different religious groups on the national level for planning strategy and program. On the state level are state councils of churches, some with rural departments, through which several denominations cooperate for more effective rural church organization and work in the state.

The rural church has also had some fortunate cooperative experiences on the local level. Overchurched communities such as described above have united their forces through the union of churches in their community or a federation in which they have joined forces for a richer program for the community, and which through cooperation they are able to finance. Others have cooperated through the larger parish and are providing a richer area ministry to the community.

Racial and Cultural Relations

Most of the major denominations in the United States favor a non-segregated Church in a non-segregated society. Yet, throughout rural America there are local churches made up largely if not wholly, of members of a minority group, such as Negro, or Spanish American, or Indian American or Oriental. In the Southeastern part of our country segregated Negro churches are part of the pattern of separate institutions for Negro people, including schools and hospitals.

The recent decisions of the United States Supreme Court calling for an end of segregated schools will undoubtedly help to end all segregated public institutions. But it is important to remember that a church is a voluntary, private organization in our country. Therefore, desegregation in churches cannot be accomplished by law but will come only through a long process of Christian education, augmented by the rich contributions which the diverse groups can and do contribute to the total cultural and technological structure of American society.

Marginal Farm People

Tenant farmers, sharecroppers, and farm migrants are our marginal agricultural people. These people, representing approximately 17 per cent of the rural population of the nation, have no land of their own, and usually have no pride in or incentive to conserve and build soil. They are frequently at the mercy of greedy landlords and employers. Tenants are sharecroppers usually living in miserable houses and are frequently in debt to their landlords. They move frequently which gives them shallow rootage in the community. They rarely make constructive contributions to the community.

The Role of the Church

The rural church leaders of America believe it to be the responsibility of the local church to spiritualize soil conservation in its community, teaching that the earth's resources are given to us by God; that we are required to be good stewards, conserving that which is good for future generations, that these resources will become extinct if we fail in our trusts; and that our culture will disintegrate.

The church has also been helpful to marginal people in settling some of them upon productive land. This has been achieved through land settlement enterprises in cooperation with the Farmer's Home Administration and other rural agencies, or through church boards, local parishes, or local cooperatives which may have loan funds for the purchase of land, livestock, and equipment. Thus, sharecroppers, tenant farmers, and transient agricultural workers may become land owners. The rural church of the United States has also promoted decent living and laboring conditions for all marginal agricultural people.

The churches through the National Council of Churches have stimulated a special moral and religious concern for farm migrants throughout the nation by making thorough studies of conditions under which these people live and initiating favorable legislation to improve their living and laboring conditions. Action has been taken to help establish some of these people on favorable agricultural land of their own. Some migrants have been permanently located in communities with year-round employment. In these situations the people have become integrated into the community and church life.

In conclusion, let me emphasize that the American rural church exists in the midst of social and economic changes. Old barriers between urban and rural society have broken down. Modern means of transportation and communication have brought the news and the culture of the whole world to the countryside. The effectiveness of the rural church depends on its flexible adjustment to continuous change; on its ability to apply old truths to new patterns of life, on its willingness to slough off outmoded traditions and to con-

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Contributors of articles to TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH speak for themselves and not for the National Council of Churches or sponsoring organizations.

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Camp Micolapa, Kansas

CARL A. GRONDORF

• Camp Micolapa, a Junior day camp, held its fifth season, August 27 through 31, 1956. The camp site was along the shores of Osawatomie Lake, near the geographical center of the area served. There were thirty-three campers and eight staff members, including two high school girls who were in training as helpers.

Camp Micolapa has been the joint effort of ten churches in Kansas: the Presbyterian churches of Osawatomie, Paola, Hillsdale, Wagstaff, Miami, Rantoul and Bethel at Spring Ridge; the Methodist church of Rantoul; and the Evangelical United Brethren churches of Peoria and Stanton. Originally these churches constituted the Miami County Larger Parish, hence the name "Micolapa." The latter five churches are now organized into an interdenominational parish.

This year, for the first time, Camp Micolapa used small group camping, with each group planning its own schedule of activities. Each group ate lunch by itself, milk being furnished daily by the camp. Once or twice a group planned to bring food from home for a "cook out." The "Green Snakes" (sixth graders) built their own fireplace for the meal, using as a grill the cover of an old washing machine. Materials for study and crafts were found on every hand.

The fossils found in the rocks led to meaningful Bible study. Ideas for this informal type of teaching through camping were found in "God at Work in His World" by Mary E. Venable (Abingdon Press, 1955). There was no set schedule for each day but the curriculum materials were a wonderful source for program ideas and references.

After a rest period, the entire camp came together for a time of recreation, games or handicraft. The game of "Long Base" became the universal favorite because it required no skill and all ages could play. High scores added to the interest. One afternoon the campers went swimming in a public pool near-by.

The day's program closed with a short vesper service on the shore of the lake led by one of the groups. This service was the production of the campers, coming out of their experience with God in His great out-of-doors.

The closing day was lengthened. Parents came for a pot-luck supper, followed by a sharing program in which the campers told something about what they had done at camp. Through this the parents caught something of the atmosphere.

There was a great contrast between the small group technique of camping and the conventional fixed schedule of activities for the entire camp. With this method each group planned and carried out its own program independent of other groups. Groups could plan an activity together when they wanted it. The campers also enjoyed the time together with the entire camp in the afternoons. The staff found the relaxed schedule easier even though it required considerable preparation.

One difficulty which arose in this type of camping was due to the camp-site. There was no opportunity to build rustic structures, etc., because it was a city-owned park. Another site is being considered where the campers will have the opportunity to build "a home-in-the-woods" and where the camp-site will be available only to Camp Micolapa during the time it is in session. One consideration for which provision must be made is an adequate shelter in case of bad weather. Osawatomie Lake has such a shelter.

A Junior Day Camp is wonderful for training the child to be away from home and to take part in group activities. In some cases, it helps parents to begin "untying the apron strings." We all enjoyed the camp very much and are looking forward

(*Continued on Page* 6)

World Day of Prayer
Friday, March 8, 1957

Theme: *Who shall separate us . . . ?*
—Romans 8:35

History: This is the seventy-first observance, which began in 1887. On the first Friday in Lent, thousands of Christians in the United States and around the world will be united in a service of prayer and thanksgiving—prayer for a better world, and thanksgiving for our Christian unity.

Purpose: The purpose of the Day is to unite all Christians in a bond of prayer and to make an offering for Christian missions at home and abroad.

Sponsor: In the United States the Day is sponsored by the General Department of United Church Women of the National Council of the Churches of Christ. This should be mentioned in announcements and proclamations. Thousands of communities in the United States have World Day of Prayer committees composed of women from each church which cooperates in observances.

Program: The service for 1957 has come from behind the iron curtain in Europe. Each year it comes from a different country.

Offering: The offering is allocated for interdenominational mission work through the Divisions of Home and Foreign Missions of the National Council of Churches after the cost of promotion and extension has been met.

Press, Radio, Television: Increasingly the channels of mass communications are being used to awaken mankind to the spiritual resources needed to build a peaceful world. The World Day of Prayer offers a natural opportunity to extend this emphasis into hearts and homes.

The day carries on through:

The Division of Home Missions by a ministry among Agricultural Migrants, Low-income Farming Communities and Indian Americans.

The Division of Foreign Missions by Education for Christian Leadership, Christian Literature for Women and Children, Pilot Projects for Village Children, Rehabilitation and Village Improvement, Christian Broadcasting, and Friendly Relations with Foreign Students.

1957 World Day of Prayer Literature: Materials may be procured from the Department of Publication and Distribution, National Council of Churches, 120 East 23rd Street, New York 10, N. Y. SEND FOR AN ORDER BLANK. Orders must be received before February 22, 1957—that is the shipping deadline date.

New Film on Community Cooperation

• "Tale of Two Towns" is an excellent film now available to Nebraska communities through the Bureau of Audio-Visual Instruction, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

In a thought-provoking manner it tells the story of how two actual Michigan communities went about solving their problems. Lew Akers comes back to his home town of Elton thinking he might like to buy the local paper and run it, but he finds the town physically and spiritually run down. The doctor has died and there is a squabble on between two factions, one wanting a health center and the other preferring to wait until they can get a doctor.

Lew Akers talks with the local druggist and the school superintendent who are the faction leaders; he talks with the newspaper editor and attends community functions. A visit to a nearby town with the druggist brings them in contact with another editor and another superintendent who tell them how they learned to work together—listen to others' opinions, disagree with ideas rather than people, and trust others even while disagreeing. Elton leaders agree to try this new method of working together.

The film is in beautiful color, runs for 45 minutes, and carries a rental fee of $6.00. If your group is looking for an educational stimulus relating to community improvement, this film is a *natural.*

—From *University of Nebraska News*

(*Continued from Page* 5)

to the summer of 1957 when we hope Camp Micolapa can be held for two weeks.

Have You Ordered Your Copies?

• Two well-known agricultural economists have written a long-time study of the town and country church in its relation to the family farm, emphasizing the close relationship of the farm, family, and church in the U.S.A. They give a good definition of the family farm, review the stress to which it has been subjected, and indicate that the family farms produce most of the food and fiber of the nation. They outline good goals for family farming, and do not minimize the serious problems faced today by those who live on these farms.

Town and Country Churches and Family Farming, by Marshall Harris and Joseph Ackerman is a bound volume of 110 pages, containing sixteen illustrations. The authors are staff members of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Farm Foundation, respectively. The book may be procured from the Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. The price is $1.50.

"Poetry and Rural Life"

• A compilation of the articles by Benson Y. Landis on American poets with rural and religious accents, which have been running in TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH, is now published in booklet form. It is entitled "Poetry and Rural Life" and it may be procured from the Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., for 50 cents per copy.

• Federation at the bottom promises larger results. By that I mean federation of the local churches. A half-dozen neighboring churches, representing as many denominations, can be induced to take a much more advanced position concerning needed reforms and new methods of work than the half-dozen denominations which they represent.

Josiah Strong,
"The Necessity of Coperation,"
The New Era, 1893

The Powerhouse at Antigonish

BENSON Y. LANDIS

• Several years ago on the campus of St. Francis Xavier University at Antigonish, N. S., I saw a Baptist minister in the midst of a warm and friendly conversation with a Roman Catholic bishop. Other Protestant rural ministers mingled freely with Catholic priests from many nations. Bishop John R. McDonald told me he wished the people of Nova Scotia to "feel at home" on the campus of this Catholic college. He added that he meant *all* the people.

I mention this because in forty years of travels over the U. S., I have never seen a scene like that. It was a high occasion. They were celebrating twenty-five years of their extension program—"adult education by means of economic cooperation." The university was 100 years old. One way of celebrating was to grant honorary degrees to Protestants as well as to Catholics, including a rural minister of the United Church of Canada and several well-known co-op officials from Canada and the U. S.

This is the true spirit of St. FX, as the people of the region call it. Its extension department for well over a quarter century has been a center of power, with ideas that have hands and feet, in communities of farmers, fishermen, miners, and other workers. Its adult education results in democratic group action.

The program took form in the early years of the great depression. Ottawa heeded the plight of fishermen by the appointment of a royal commission. In the traditional British fashion, the commission held hearings among the people. The commission then recommended voluntary organization among the fishermen. It seemed natural that the educators at Antigonish should lead the way. Among the leaders were Msgr. M. M. Coady, the "Doctor Coady" whom everyone in the Maritimes seems to know; Dr. J. J. Tompkins, pioneer adult educator for mutual aid; and A. B. MacDonald, who later became secretary of the Cooperative Union of Canada.

They held many mass meetings, but mainly to persuade people to organize themselves into small study clubs. In these, no more than ten people was the rule. They should elect their own leaders, meet to study their own situation, and take some group action to improve their economic lot.

Literally a thousand of these small study clubs sprang up. Many a farmer, miner, or fisherman was proud to say he was studying as a member of a study club. Men and women at the power house in Antigonish organized an extension library that sent out numerous packets of pamphlets for discussion.

Out of the thousand study clubs came over 435 credit unions. In the credit unions people educated one another, and they used their savings to encourage other cooperatives. There are now over 150 retail cooperative stores, over forty housing associations, several cooperative insurance companies, and a great variety of farmer marketing associations. In 1930, by contrast, there was not one credit union, and other cooperatives were relatively few.

The St. FX extension department now uses radio a great deal. The cooperatives themselves carry on education. The small group technique is still used, however. There are significant "kitchen discussions," where women meet to talk over mutual economic problems. For the co-ops of Nova Scotia have never underestimated the influence of a woman.

"The most significant piece of adult education on this continent—judged by practical results" is the way several specialists have summed up the program. Statesmen, social scientists, and clergymen from many nations now visit the university's extension department. Its staff has given technical help in the Orient. Through short courses on the campus, it trains many officers of Canadian and overseas cooperatives. Thus, they have taken the university to the people.

They have also brought many people to the university. They have dignified non-academic education. At the meeting I mentioned the first honorary master of arts degree was granted to a farmer who for twenty-five years had been a study club member in his own community.

Three times the Holy See has commended the university's extension department. This year an American cooperator, during an interview with Pope Pius XII, mentioned the Antigonish movement. He found the Pope both interested and informed. Protestant ministers who have traveled in Nova Scotia and studied the program seem as much impressed as the Pope.

All over the U. S. many church people seem to be saying that the churches cannot say or do anything specific about cooperatives. They seem perfectly satisfied with some non-conclusive study that does not result in action or resolution.

Place over against this negative concept the conclusions of Bishop John R. McDonald of Antigonish when he spoke last year in Panama at an international Catholic conference on rural life. After a thorough discussion, he said:

"It remains for me to add that the cooperative movement, wisely built on a Christian foundation, and motivated by Christian principles and ideals, is not only good for people, but the encouragement of this movement by priests is good for the church. Throughout the Christian era it has always been good for the church when her priests showed their concern for the peoples' material problems. The Church's work is not to be confined to the sanctuary; it must reach out into the highways and byways of life for God's glory, for the sake of immortal souls, and for the building of a truly Christian civilization."

From *Cooperative News Service*

Don't forget to send your change of address to TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH.

Luoma Photo

Whither Rural Life?

WILLIAM G. JAMISON

• Recently a leader of the United Church of India visited the campus of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Iowa. Primarily charged with the work of supervision of village parishes in his homeland, he was eager to discover methods of furthering the work of the town and country church, which is a major emphasis at Dubuque; but we saw that he felt his visit to our seminary and to nearby parishes was disappointing.

We asked him why, and discovered that he had brought with him an Indian's conception of rural life. To him, rural life does not exist here. "Your farmers know how to read and to write! They have television sets, automobiles, running water, and electricity. They aren't rural. They are urban!" He saw little application to his work in India. A difference in definitions may have prevented his benefiting from his visit. Or it may be that American and Indian rural cultures are so different that none of the work we do here can yet be applied to the Indian scene.

The Indian's evaluation of rural life in the United States raises an issue, just the same. Are we handicapping ourselves with static conceptions of the rural community and the social dynamics within it? To him, rural life here has ceased. Many Americans would agree. But has it, or are they retaining a worn-out definition of "rural"? It is true that, because of technological and population changes and legislative programs, rural neighborhoods and communities are losing their identities. Life is becoming more and more "urbanized," even in the most "rural" of areas.

We who are working to make the rural church more effective must note well the social changes about us, not letting worn-out terms and definitions hamper evaluation of these changes and resultant action. Acceptance of the term, "town and country," is a step in the right direction, but that will not prevent our being hamstrung by fossilized connotations of words.

Research in rural sociology shows that rural social institutions are being centralized in larger trade centers; don't let our concept of the team-haul community blind us to this process. Rural sociologists keep telling us that rural people are accepting urban social patterns of desiring participation in special interest groups; don't let our nostalgia for the nineteenth-century rural church shield us from this change.

Recently I had the privilege of addressing a group of Iowa rural church leaders after they had conducted a number of important and meaningful discussions on means of furthering the work of the rural church. Disturbed by the use of terms and definitions applicable to rural life of yesterday rather than today or tomorrow, I exclaimed to the group: "Gentlemen! We may all live to see the day when there will not be a church left in Iowa which we can classify as 'rural.' That is, by the standards of today, Iowa will be completely urban or suburban, or suburban in appearance, from border to border. Country life as we know it will soon cease. Let us lay our plans accordingly."

If rural life is undergoing great change our terms and definitions and perspectives must change, too. Our Indian friend did not recognize the rural life going on in front of his own eyes. We can find ourselves in the same predicament if we use patterns of thought made rigid by concepts that no longer apply and, indeed, may never again apply.

Prayer for Young Ministers

• Our Father, the guide of all who put their trust in thee, we remember before thee young ministers in their first pastorates. Endow them with special graces that even with their lack of experience they may do well on difficult fields. Grant them wisdom beyond their years. Enable them early to learn to channel their energies, and to gain quiet satisfaction through short steps toward the lofty goals thou dost inspire. *Amen.*

—MARK RICH

Democracy and the Local Church

MARK RICH

• The church in town and country has a stake in democracy. The kind of churches we want can thrive only in the fertile soil of a democratic environment. Likewise the church is one of the chief forces for the nurturing of democracy. It is impossible to have the kind of churches we desire outside a democratic society and the democratic society we cherish is unattainable without the church.

Dr. Liberty Hyde Bailey suggested that our idea of a democracy is a society in which each person is surrounded with the rights and conditions which will insure his maximum self-expression and development and at the same time contribute his greatest usefulness for the good of the group. There is harmony between personal and group action, between working with enthusiasm for oneself and at the same time working with enthusiasm with one's fellows.

Democracy is Local

Democracy is local. It does not come down from the centers of political power to the local units. Democracy in Washington and in the state capitals rises from local communities. The local community derives its democracy from within itself. The authorized representatives can encourage or discourage local democracy but they cannot create it. Democracy in high places is never a substitute for the local democracy and it is not antecedent to it. A nation is democratic only as its communities are democratic.

Democracy and the Church

What then does this mean for the churches? First, Protestant churches are institutions which seek to uphold and cling to the ideal of democracy. The emphasis upon the worth of the individual makes democracy a natural outgrowth of the Protestant witness. The church is a greenhouse where the tender shoots of democracy are watered and nurtured.

Because of the democratic nature of the Protestant Church it is in a strong position to nurture democracy, an activity to be pursued in season and out of season. If the church fails in this mission, the loss is great. The school, the home and the community agencies make slow progress without the church's contribution.

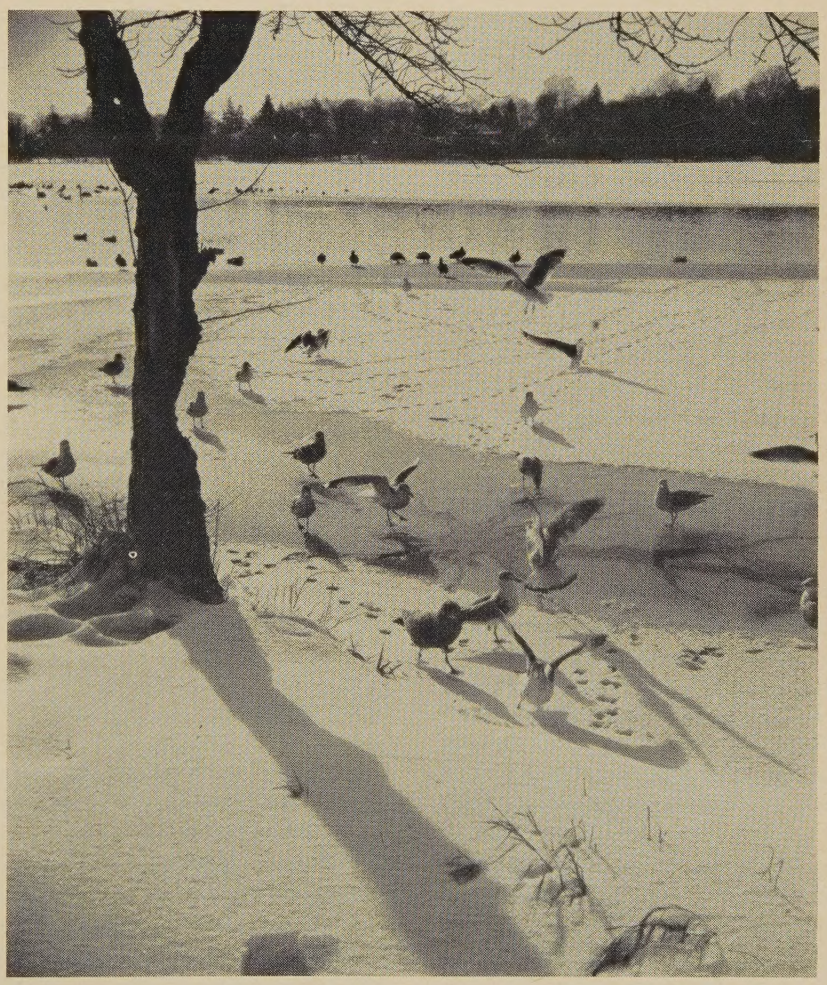
Churches foster democracy in several ways.

First, people in local churches are kept informed and intelligent. To learn, to know, to understand is the prerogative of the rank and file. All men are kings in the realm of knowledge, understanding and wisdom. So the church teaches and encourages learning. The people have access to the Bible and directly to God. They have the right and the capacity to know the truth which makes them free.

Second, the people plan programs and formulate policy. People have a right to discuss, to speak, and to think, and to vote. The church grants and cherishes this right for its members. It encourages members to express these same rights in the community. What a contrast from the centuries of thralldom in which the common man was held.

Third, the people execute programs. Having made a decision they have a part in carrying it out. This is a necessity to democracy. There can be no freedom without responsibility. A man is not free to vote a

(*Continued on Page* 10)



Gustav Anderson from A. Devaney, N.Y.

(*Continued from Page 9*)

proposition in the church and wash his hands from supporting it. Responsibility is a part of democracy. Insistence on the right to self-expression and self-rule without carrying responsibility is like asking for pay without work. Every man shares his neighbors' burdens.

A Protestant church with faith in its capacity for self-government so nurtures its members that they are qualified to exercise this divine franchise. The church that discovers the means to this end is one of the strongest of all forces for the preservation of democracy.

But alas churches often fail in this achievement. The churches that are declining and dying are almost always the churches that lack planning and effective business meetings. It is not customary for churches to die against the determined, democratic will of the group. A church declines when group action is absent.

Much has been made of population decline, population change, and increasing costs as factors in church decline. It is said that some churches could live if they would cooperate with other churches or tried to reach the people in the area. That is true. But the very fact that a church does not face its possibilities of adjustment is good evidence that the process of democracy has failed. To cooperate, churches must first understand why it is necessary; then they must make plans for cooperation and commit themselves to these plans. Democratic action is the key to wise adjustment. It is the key to a vigorous church.

How Churches Fail

Churches fail in their democratic responsibility in two ways: The first is that they neglect the processes of democracy. They can neglect their democratic rights by not having meetings of committees, boards or of the entire church membership. They can refrain from discussing vital issues. They can shield their memberships from carrying responsibilities.

In New England I once heard of "shrine churches" by which was meant little Protestant churches with half a dozen members and no services, but an annual "Home Coming Sunday." Those churches were not doing the things that preserve democracy. A church which thinks it has such a hold on truth that it needs nothing more is not practicing democracy. A church which thinks it is so strong in membership and organization that it does not need improvement is not practicing democracy. A church where a few members carry the responsibilities of the many has wandered from the democratic path.

The second way to fail in democracy is to violate the sovereignty of the church. If one person becomes the domineering factor in the church, that church is robbed of democracy. The sovereignty of the church body is contradicted.

This one person may be a minister and it may be a layman—either one can do serious damage. Sometimes a board contravenes the action of the church by robbing it of its right to make decisions. It frequently happens like this: the church body decides by proper motion to have, for instance, "Home Coming Sunday." The Board later—formally or informally—declares itself out of agreement with the church action. Without notifying the church of its contrary opinion "Home Coming Sunday" is cancelled. The board usurped the sovereign right of the church. The board could of course save the cause of democracy by bringing its recommendation back to the church. But democracy is flouted and a dangerous deed is committed when a board, committee, or person so nullifies an action. The damage is greater than is generally realized.

Sometimes the church's sovereignty is contravened by a failure to carry out its decisions. A committee or a person empowered to act fails to do so. When the negligence is repeated the church may weary of making decisions which are not fulfilled. I surmise that these sins of neglect and contradiction are far more widespread than is realized. Of course, these sins are not so dangerous when communities are well adjusted and imbued with democratic sentiments. But when the environment is undergoing shattering changes, the church's neglect of its democratic responsibility is fatal. It results in a church without potency. "A church which gives up its democracy is heading for the icebergs," said a man with broad experiences in rural communities.

Practicing Democracy

Now that we have the ideal of democracy in the church, we shall turn to methods for fulfilling it. What can a church do to become a wellspring of democratic action?

1. Each church body needs to have regular business meetings at such intervals as seem advisable in the situation. These meetings should be governed by parliamentary practices that guarantee democratic expression. The spirit and scale of values and appreciation permeating the meeting must represent faith in the capacity of each person to contribute to the decision of all. The procedure and spirit of the meeting should also deal justly and kindly but effectively with any force that betrays the real purpose of the people.

2. Each church needs a representative board which serves it. This board becomes the guide and adviser of the church. It studies, plans, weighs and evaluates. It carries out policies for the church and it makes recommendations to the church. Within itself it remains fully democratic. It can never act for the church unless empowered to do so.

3. Each church needs committees to carry out the regular and special functions of the church. Democratic committees never become authoritarian but always act in reference to the church. They serve as agents of the church to make the democratic process less cumbersome and more effective.

4. The church needs skill in the techniques of democracy. It must be efficient in getting facts before the people in planning and in carrying out plans. Democracy does not mean long and aimless discussion or arguing over trivialities. Skillful practice of democracy can eliminate the bungling and awkwardness which discredits it.

5. *Faith*—faith in democracy and

faith that the people are capable and that under God they can achieve. This faith must be so abiding that the rights and worth of the people will not be violated and infringed upon. This faith is at the very heart of the Christian Gospel. Each person is a child of God. Each has a contribution to make.

Let no one think that the way of democracy is easy. Drastic and revolutionary adjustments are sometimes necessary. They are not easily made. Groups may not have enough facts. They cannot easily achieve the objectivity required to make the right decisions. We may not reach the ideal but we can humbly, persistently and patiently follow the vision of a fairer day in which each person grows to maturity with the maximum of both freedom and responsibility. This was the kind of faith our Master had.

Milk, Maples and Mountains

EARL BANNER

• Kenneth Bascom farms a mountain top in Acworth, N. H., where he makes a lot of maple syrup, produces a lot of milk, and does not envy any man on a bottomland farm.

Recently selected by Claremont, N. H., as its nominee for national Farmer of the Year, Bascom farms some 292 acres on the crown of Kingsbury Mountain. From this site he can look across into Vermont and Massachusetts on clear days and he can look down on hawks soaring high over the valleys almost any day.

This 30-year-old farmer is a vice-president of the New Hampshire Maple Producers and hopes someday to be the Granite State's biggest maple producer. "We certainly have trees enough to make into the biggest sugar bush in the state, and we are getting equipment little by little," he reports. Last spring he hung 4,000 buckets and made 617 gallons of syrup. But for the fact that tent caterpillars had defoliated most of his trees the previous summer, he might have made more than 1,000 gallons. The plan is to hang several thousand more buckets this year or next and to install pipelines to speed the chore of gathering sap.

There is a strange stone structure in the middle of Bascom's sugar bush. It may have been built by Irish monks or the Norsemen, some local scholars believe. Ackworth's earliest town records make no mention of early colonists settling anywhere near this particular area. "We are quite certain Indians did not go in for stone structures, so there is a strong possibility that these 'buildings,' whatever they were, might have preceded the early colonists here," the young farmer comments.

But the sugar-bush aspect of Bascom's farm is really only a sideline, and will always stay that way. The young farmer is milking forty Holstein cows and producing sixteen cans of milk each day. Kenneth and his father, the Rev. Eric Bascom, from whom he bought the farm a few years ago, are currently building the second of two new silos to better feed this big high-altitude herd. Bascom's present program calls for raising all the hay he needs as well as eighteen acres of corn for silage. The elder Bascom bought the farm, then in very run-down condition, in the middle of the depression for $35 down, and $35 a month." He had had to abandon the ministry because of ill health, but mountain-top farming has so much improved his physique that he plans to re-enter the pulpit. Meanwhile, he works with Kenneth on the ambitious farm improvement program, wrestling rocks with as much skill and vigor as one expects from farm hands half his age.

Kenneth Bascom graduated from the University of New Hampshire's two-year Thompson School of Agriculture after discharge from two years of service with the Army in Italy, in 1946 and 1947. He had made up his mind to become a farmer when he was a 4-H poultry-club boy. A club leader for three years, in 1946 just before he entered the Army, he attended the National 4-H Club Camp in Washington, D. C. He started his 4-H Club work with a dozen gift chickens; in the course of a few years he had worked this small poultry nucleus up to a 1,000-bird flock and to wholesale selling of eggs.

A member of DHIA the past three years, Bascom reports with pride that his herd has shown constant improvement since he started participation in the program. "This hill-top farming entails a lot of climbing, some folks seem to think," Bascom states; "but they forget that it is a lot easier walking downhill, too. I do not envy farmers with nice level fields down on the river banks. They get flooded out. The river land may be easier to work, but our hilltop loam will grow good hay year after year with only half as much reseeding necessary. There are advantages to that, too." He put up more than 4,000 bales of first-class hay last year and expects to be able to put up all he needs for his rapidly expanding herd this summer. He is also planning to grow the eighteen acres of corn to fill the two big silos with a combined capacity of 250 tons.

Kenneth Bascom, who has served his town for three years as selectman, generally finds little to complain about, but does admit that he wishes there were not so many people who seem to believe that syrup making is confined to hanging a bucket on a maple tree. "Syrup making is much harder work, more costly, and far less profitable than most consumers seem to believe," he says. "Not many of them realize that you have to carry in and then boil away more than 200 tons of maple sap to get only four and a half tons of syrup. You burn up a cord of wood for every twenty-five gallons of syrup you turn out."

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THE RURAL NEW YORKER,
February, 1956

Who are the Chosen People?

DAVID E. LINDSTROM

Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches, but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices kindness, justice, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, says the Lord. (Jer. 9:23-24)

The time has come when the people of the United States should face up to the fact that God has seen fit to bless them far beyond that which any nation on earth has ever experienced. Why?

Can it be that He has chosen us for a special mission in the world?

Each July we celebrate the day of American Independence. Any perusal of the historical records will reveal that the gaining of this independence was a phenomenal thing. Can it be that God might have had a hand in the creation of this new nation and the things for which it stands and to which it was dedicated?

Christian Heritage

The Christian heritage is deep and strong in our country, especially among the farmers. The early settlers were farmers. They were mostly Protestants. They were deeply religious. This religious character of the farm people of this new and growing country has profoundly affected the character, not only of the farmers, but of the business men of America.

The attributes that Benjamin Franklin held dear were that honesty is the best policy, careful accounting is necessary for any business, time is money and credit is money. Labor can be consecrated. The honest and enthusiastic performance of one's work is a man's sacred duty.

America was peopled with those who held such precepts as basic and sound to their very lives and actions. This is what has made America the greatest nation on earth.

Let us now look at our position in the world today.

First, we must acknowledge that we are the world's most powerful nation. No other nation has the productive agriculture, the efficient manufacturing, the wide-spread and modern system of distribution, the schools, churches, cars, radios, television sets, modern and comfortable homes, and the variety and purity of the foods that we possess. (You have to travel in some foreign country to really appreciate our own). But we also have the most powerful means of destruction—the atomic bomb and the hydrogen bomb and all the other means—and we are being challenged in that position by only one country: Russia.

Second, we are looked upon as a Christian nation. Whether we live up to it is another question. Today 60 percent of our people profess to belong to a church or synagogue, all stemming from the teaching of the Bible, most being followers of one Christ and therefore Christians. It is this fact that is our greatest hope in the world today, I believe, that we try to follow Him in all we do and encourage others to follow Him as well.

Thirdly, we are mostly a people of white skin who live in a world peopled predominantly by those of dark skin: Asia and Africa where live almost two-thirds of the people of the world. They are increasing in numbers much faster than are the whites. It is up to us to realize that all of us are brothers under the Fatherhood of God, no matter what may be the color of our skin.

Fourth, we are a country with huge surpluses of food which we seem unwilling to share with our dark-skinned brothers, most of whom suffer from malnutrition. If we were truly a Christian nation we would put forth all the efforts at our disposal to make an end to this situation; a situation on which our God and Father, I'm sure, is frowning and will continue to frown. How long can we test His patience?

Fifth, we are a nation, therefore, greatly envied by the other people in the world, increasingly so as they see the very wide gaps between the way they have to live in poverty and hunger and the way we live in luxury and pleasure. This envy is leading to hatred and a desire to have those things, even if they must be taken away from us by another world war or some other means of force.

If you were to spend three years, as I did, among the people of East Asia you would get to see our position in the world in a new light. We who never get beyond the borders of our beautiful country cannot know how we look to the teeming millions in these other countries. They are human beings, too, and they want good food, nice homes, attractive clothes, and since they look upon us as a Christian nation they wonder why we are not doing more, as Christ would have us do, to help these people find their way to a better kind of life.

Foreign Aid

Let us look at the situation in which the Japanese find themselves. Farmers in this country are accustomed to having 200 or more acres of land. In Japan they are confined to two-and-a-half acres of land, or even less. We have a population of a little over 160 million people; Japan has 89 million, more than half our population, and they live on islands 15 per cent less in area than the state of California. This situation is even more aggravated, they tell me, in the world's second largest nation in population in the world: India.

In East Asia lies the hope and the danger to the free world today. If they can be helped to find their way to better living conditions through the free and democratic way there will be an end to the threat of communist subjection. But if they find they cannot lift themselves to higher living levels in this way they will succumb to the other. If this happens, the way will be closed to any Christian nurture in these nations and we will be faced with tremendously higher defense costs.

We are now engaged in a great program of foreign aid, spending billions of dollars in free countries

all around the world. The chief motive behind these programs is to help these people find their way to a social system guaranteeing the freedom of choice. These countries, it is hoped, will become our allies against the forces of communism in Russia and China. In spite of all our efforts we seem to be losing face, gaining enemies, rather than aiding the people to lift themselves by their own bootstraps. Selfish ends seem to dominate, or at least the masses of people are led to believe that we are the ones seeking to place them under a new form of foreign domination. Our efforts through the hugest sums of money and the swarms of specialists, many of whom live on levels far beyond those the people they seek to help can enjoy, give our enemies the ammunition to propagandize that American imperial capitalism is the new form of domination we seek. Besides, we are white men—"we are spending so much money in these underdeveloped countries to keep non-whites subservient?"

Our motives must be made crystal clear. There is one group from our country—the Christian missionaries—whose motives are not misunderstood: They are seeking to bring the Christian faith to all people in the world. Their weakness lies not in the power of their appeal, but in the fact that they, alas, are divided; they are not one in Christ as they claim, but too often discount each other's work. The World Council ecumenical movement has done much to overcome the divisiveness in the appeals made by Christians to the peoples in East Asia; but they are still very much a minority group.

Significant Programs

To me the most significant work that is being done by Christians in East Asia is that which provides for the training of youth in the true spirit of Christian democracy. It is in institutions like the International Christian University, where denominationalism is unimportant, but where the spirit of Christ dominates the work of all the staff members, that the most effective work is being done. Here are being trained the youth who in the future will be the leaders of these countries. If the training is done well they will be added to the all too few devoted leaders, truly Christian, who are getting into positions of leadership and responsibility in Japan and the other East Asian countries.

No less significant are the efforts that are being put forth by CROP, Heifers for Relief, and similar Christian-motivated acts, which seek only to know that they are meeting the needs of those in greatest need. No more lasting a friend of Christ can be found than the man who has been given a cow so that his children may have milk. He gets the first glimpse of the true Christian spirit when he learns why the cow was given, and why he is expected to give the first female calf to one of his needy neighbors. These agencies do not ask what is the belief of the man in need; if he needs help it is given to him. No stronger a disciple of Christ can be found, and no greater an advocate of this new thing called Christian democracy can be desired than this man and his family. The investments we are making in this kind of "giving" are the best investments, by far, that are being made with United States dollars: the training of youth and help for the needy.

What, really, are our motives in helping these countries through the various government and non-government programs that are being carried on? Christ would place only two tests upon our efforts: do we desire with all our hearts to do the will of God? Are we willing to forsake all others and follow Him to the uttermost ends of the earth? If the government and the non-government missions meet these two tests we need have no qualms about what will be the reaction of the peoples to whom we minister. Anything less will not be acceptable to them or to our God; this is the true test of whether or not we are a Christian nation in our dealings with the world. Are we God's chosen people? One can answer, yes, but only if we are willing to commit ourselves to His will in this world. Anyone who seeks honestly and truthfully to find the will of God and to do His will is one of His chosen people. This is the hope and the way for the world; no other way can be found. This way, though it be straight, narrow, steep and hard, is the way that will lead to world peace and the Kingdom of God on earth.

A Third Element

• "Beyond the attitude of wonder and of concern there is a third element in religious experience, the one which is most clearly exhibited and described by the mystics. It is an attitude of oneness not only in oneself, not only with one's fellow men, but with all life and, beyond that, with the universe. It comprises both the sharp and even painful awareness of one's self as a separate and unique entity and the longing to break through the confines of this individual organization and to be one with the All. The religious attitude in this sense is simultaneously the fullest experience of individuality and of its opposite; it is not so much a blending of the two as a polarity from whose tension religious experience springs. It is an attitude of pride and integrity and at the same time of a humility which stems from experiencing oneself as but a thread in the texture of the universe."

Erich Fromm, author of
Psychoanalysis and Religion

Rural Life Sunday

• Rural Life Sunday, the fifth after Easter, or Rogation Sunday, will be held on May 26th this year.

The Department of Town and Country Church will publish an Order of Service for use by a congregation. It has been prepared for the Department by the Rev. Dale W. Medearis, national director of town and country work for the Disciples of Christ.

Copies may be obtained from your cooperating home mission board or from the Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches, 257 Fourth Avenue,

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John G. Neihardt — American Poet

BENSON Y. LANDIS

• John G. Neihardt was born in Illinois, of German ancestry, and established himself as one of the Middlewesterners who celebrated in verse the winning of a continent. His family soon moved to Nebraska. At age twelve as a result of a dream he devoted his life to verse. He taught country school and was once the editor of a "fighting country newspaper." He was for a time literary editor of the *St. Louis Post-Despatch,* and lived for a while in the Ozarks. He was made "poet-laureate" of Nebraska by vote of the legislature in 1921.

The *Collected Poems* (Macmillan, 1926) reveal his appreciation of the life of the region in which he lived. One group of writings is on "The Poet's Town." These poems were written between 1908 and 1912.

But still did the Mighty Makers
Stir in the common sod;
The corn through its awful acres
Trembled and thrilled with God!

Neihardt once observed that "the religion I managed to achieve through direct experience seems too profound for dogmatic statement." One of his early writings bore the title, "Divine Enchantment." Among the poems in the group on "The Poet's Town," was one in music:

Hark, the music calling!
From the earth it grows.
From the sky 'tis falling.
In the wind it blows!

One entitled "April Theology" included these lines:

O to be breathing and hearing and feeling and seeing!
O the ineffably glorious privilage of being! . . .
But all woven into the glad indivisible scheme,
God fashioning out in the Finite a part of His dream!

In one poem the poet gives advice to poets:

You wish to be a poet, Little Man?
More verses limping neath their big intent?
Well—one must be a poet if one can!
But do you know the way the others went?

Mr. Neihardt's writings revealed high interest in the significance of the fur trade and of the Indians. He professed an interest in the "watersheds of history," the times when one order is passing and another is coming into being. These are the times when men look wistfully backward and forward with some fear. In 1918 Mr. Neihardt wrote: "We are experiencing the wane of individualism; we are beginning to think in terms of the group." Those with an interest in the romantic would certainly find satisfaction in the stories of the expeditions that ascended the rivers and the mountains of the west. His "Song of the Indian Wars" was part of an epic of the west on which he worked for eleven years. Here he dealt with "the last great fight for the bison pastures of the Plains between the westering white man and the prairie tribes." He tried to tell a story frankly—not to "fictionize."

Another group of poems, published in 1912, was "The Stranger at the Gate." These he called a "lyric sequence celebrating the mystery of birth." Eleven poems are on this great theme. One, "Ballad to a Poet's Child" ended thus, revealing the fire of the poet and his command of form:

Star-glint, moon-glow,
Gathered in a mesh!
Spring-hope, white fire
By a kiss beguiled!
Something of the world-joy
Dreaming into flesh!
Bird-song, vine-thrill
Quickened to a child.

Included is a "Song to the Sun," the last stanza of which reads:

Surely you have seen it in your wide sky-going—
An eager little comrade of the spirits of the wheat;
All the hymning forests and the melody of growing,
All the ocean thunderings and all the rivers flowing;
Silenced by the music of its feet!

Another, "The Child's Heritage," concludes thus:

Unto thy flesh, the soothing dust;
Thy soul, the gift of being free:
The torch my fathers gave in trust,
Thy father gives to thee!

At Penn-Alpha

• The Penn-Alpha Larger Parish and The Parish of the Master, located in the Erie Presbytery of the Synod of Pennsylvania were chosen as two of the larger parishes which the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church wished to have a group of outgoing missionaries visit and study as a part of their training program.

Thirteen "future" missionaries and three exchange students made the journey to the Parishes on a Saturday in September, 1956. In the afternoon they were escorted on a tour by members of the staff. They visited the Sandy Lake, New Lebanon, Fairfield, Hadley, Utica, Cooperstown, Polk, and Mt. Pleasant Presbyterian churches which make up the Parish and were given the background and details of the individual churches.

That evening they were guests at an "All-Parish" supper, which was attended by 175 members of the Parish. During the program which followed the meal the guests were introduced, and they gave a few of the highlights concerning their future tasks in the mission field. The "future" missionaries were then given a chance to ask questions regarding the operational features of the Parish.

After a night spent in the homes of the parishioners, the missionaries conducted services in the churches and visited the church school classes. They were then guests in different homes for the Sunday meal.

This was a splendid opportunity for members of the Parish to have personal contact with those who are to represent the Church in other sections of the world.

• Whatever is hateful unto thee, do it not unto thy fellow. This is the whole law. The rest is but commentary. —TALMUD

(*Continued from Page* 13)
New York 10, N. Y. at the following rates: Single copies, 5 cents each; 100 copies or more, $1.50 for each 100 copies. Carriage extra on quantity orders.

Boy Scout Jamboree

• Boy Scout officials report excellent progress in preparing the site at historic Valley Forge, Pennsylvania for the Fourth National Jamboree to be held July 12-18, 1957.

A 1,500-acre tent city will house more than 50,000 Boy Scouts, Explorers, and leaders from all parts of the nation and some from other lands. It will have its own water, electricity and telephone exchange, post offices, and other services for the largest gathering of boys in the western hemisphere.

About one hundred special trains and hundreds of buses will transport Scouts to the Jamboree. Railroads are giving jamboree participants special railroad rates and assisting in planning routes so that Scouts may visit leading cities and scenic spots before and after the jamboree.

Contingents will arrive during the three days before the jamboree's opening date, July 12. Three days will be needed to speed the Scouts home after the jamboree closes the evening of July 18.

The jamboree campers will be at least twelve years old, holding Second Class rank or higher. The jamboree is a self-sustaining enterprise made possible by the fifty dollar jamboree fee paid by each participant.

National, state, and local health and protective agencies are cooperating to give the jamboree a health and safety record better than the average city of 50,000 population. Doctors from home areas will travel and live with the contingents. Each jamboree Scout and Explorer is checked by a physician at home and again upon his arrival at the jamboree.

Already completed is a stage 300 feet wide and 100 feet deep in front of a natural amphitheatre that will hold about 55,000 jamboree campers and guests. Spectacular programs are planned for the opening evening, July 12, and the farewell program on the evening of July 18. Outstanding Americans will participate in both programs.

There will be other Scout shows in sectional arenas. Campfires and daytime demonstrations will give each Scout a chance to show his stuff or be entertained and instructed by the other fellow's skills.

Each night, radio-controlled trucks will deliver fresh dairy products, meat, fruit and vegetables to commissary refrigerators. It will be high-quality food, bought by the carload, to fit well-balanced menus.

Troops will get their food and cooking supplies before each meal at sectional commissary tents. Jamboree campers will cook their own meals and share the daily camp chores. Each patrol or crew member will share such tasks as fire builder, cook, and "cleaner-upper." Thanks to the use of over one million paper plates there won't be a dishwashing problem.

The jamboree camp inhabitant will have plenty of time to pick up camping techniques through intercamp visits, displays, campfires and demonstrations. There will be excursions to historic shrines in and near Philadelphia.

Sunday, July 14 will bring one of the most impressive thrills to the jamboree. In several religious services, each conducted in designated areas simultaneously, the more than 50,000 boys and leaders will worship according to their own faiths, all united in the freedom of their right to worship God.

The sprawling tent city will be governed by the Scout Oath and Law and administered by teams of national, sectional, and troop Scouting leaders. Scoutmasters and their assistants are being carefully selected locally for the responsibility and honor of jamboree troop leadership.

For many of the 50,000 participants it will be a "once in a lifetime" experience seeing America and camping with others from all parts of the nation.

• Ernie Pyle, the world's most famous and most-loved war correspondent, used to attach himself to a small military unit for several days, living as they lived in the field or at the battle front. When he had soaked himself in the experiences of thees men, he returned to the rear to write about them. Pyle wrote slowly, insisting on quiet. He always rewrote his column at least three or four times before he sent it to the newspaper.

Abraham Lincoln rewrote the Gettysburg speech at least three times. There are those who say he wrote it four times. In his final revision (which may be seen in the Library of Congress at Washington, D. C.) he significantly added to the statement, "That this nation may have a new birth of freedom," the glorious phrase "under God," making his challenge read, "that this nation under God may enjoy a new birth of freedom."

Dr. Alexander Whyte of Edinburgh, the Scotch sermon master, said, "No sermon is fit to preach which has not been written three times."

—Benjamine P. Browne, in
Let There Be Light
(Fleming H. Revell Co.)

Remember the Convocation Dates!

• The 1957 Convocation on the Church in Town and Country will meet at Green Lake, Wisconsin, October 22-24.

(*Continued from Page* 4)
centrate on the essential teaching of Jesus Christ interpreted in the context of contemporary life in the nation.

The leaders in the rural church movement see in all this a new rural church of tomorrow, with wider concerns and a powerful moral force, raising our rural society to a higher level of abundant living in God.

The living rural church of tomorrow in the United States will have divested itself of denominational sovereignty, segregation, and class distinction, giving the Christian faith an open channel into the hearts of all men, inspiring their labors, blessing their fellowship, and relating all their work to God, the Lord of Heaven and earth.

BOOK REVIEW

The Free Citizen. By Theodore Roosevelt. Edited by Hermann Hagedorn. The Macmillan Company, New York. 1956. $4.50.

This book is so arranged that excerpts from Theodore Roosevelt's writings are alternated with chapters of narrative. Mr. Hagedorn writes of Mr. Roosevelt:

"He was skillful with words, picking the simple ones that everybody could understand and arranging them in ways that everybody could follow; but, first and foremost, he was a man of action, and his words had meaning for the people he addressed, and have meaning for us today, mainly because of the way, throughout his public life, he gave them substance by deeds that brought credit to his country and made life richer and more satisfying for the average citizen."

Theodore Roosevelt wrote and spoke often about morals and religion. Mr. Hagedorn includes a piece Mr. Roosevelt once wrote anonymously for *The Ladies' Home Journal* on the values of going to church.

Once a cartoon was published, showing a farmer reading by kerosene lamp a message Theodore Roosevelt had sent to Congress. It is fitting that Congress has established a bi-partisan commission which will soon be encouraging the recognition of the 100th anniversary of his birth on October 27, 1958.

—Benson Y. Landis

Liberty Hyde Bailey, An Informal Biography. By Philip Dorf. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York. 1956. $3.50.

Thousands of admirers of Liberty Hyde Bailey (1858-1954) will welcome the little book by Philip Dorf titled simply with the name of the scientist, teacher and leader whose fame is world-wide. Dorf has skillfully woven his narrative with quotes and tales that reflect the radiant spirit of his subject. He depicts his colorful and eventful life, his travels and his work, his leadership in country life and in nature study.

While L. H. Bailey was a bit too independent to be a conventional churchman, he was possessed of deep reverence and an abiding sense of spiritual values. In 1903 he said: "For myself, if I have any gifts I mean to use them for the spiritualizing of agriculture." His little book, "The Holy Earth," has been reprinted and has furnished "texts," background and framing material for many a talk and sermon on rural life. His concepts of man's responsibility to God and of man's trusteeship of the land have enriched the thinking of countless thousands. He believed in the rural church and said so.

Dorf writes well and the brevity and fluent style of his little biography will appeal to busy people who want a quick and vivid glimpse of a great man who has meant so much to rural religion, as well as to agriculture and beauty.

—Paul Work

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Miracle in the Mountains. By Harnett T. Kane with Inez Henry. Doubleday & Co., Garden City, N. Y. 1956. $3.95.

Martha Berry always believed there was something wonderful around the corner. This quality of burning enthusiasm, dedicated to the education of southern mountain young people, plus her tireless energy—"she had springs in her heels"—made the Berry Schools in Georgia a reality. Faith in God and in the generosity of people, if only they were approached in the right way, helped the schools to grow from a simple log cabin to a vast campus with Ford-endowed Gothic buildings. And during her lifetime Martha Berry had the joy of watching 10,000 young people come out from ignorance into life equipped with the strength and the skills to meet it.

Harnett T. Kane's book is a vivid and penetrating story not only of the personality and achievements of Martha Berry but of the mountain families whom she served and the tireless staff who helped to bring about the miracle in the mountains.

Mr. Kane has been able to give life to numberless touching and amusing events in the progress of this story of a modern pioneer. Who but Martha Berry would have thought of greeting Thomas Edison, as his train passed through Georgia, with a student-baked angel cake, a bunch of violets, and a hastily written "poem"? Who else while walking through a wood would have dictated letters to a stumbling secretary who had to race to keep up with her, physically as well as mentally? Who else would have found a little old Georgia boy at the end of a plowline and would have whisked him off to the school without benefit of clothes fit to wear, a toothbrush, or money to pay for his schooling?

Friends and relatives, students and teachers, board members and neighbors — all have contributed their recollections of this unique woman and of the unique institute known as "The Berry Schools."

—Monica B. Owen

Christian Rural Overseas Program

• Protestant churches of the United States are launching a drive for $2,000,000 to be used for refugee relief and inter-church aid for Hungary and Eastern Europe, according to R. Norris Wilson, executive director of Church World Service, principal Protestant overseas relief agency in the United States. Church World Service is one arm of the National Council of Churches.

Church World Service, through CROP, has purchased for immediate shipment to Hungarian refugees in Austria, 60,000 pounds of sugar, 40,000 pounds of edible fats, and 10,000 pounds of canned beef, valued at over $15,000.

A Prayer in Winter

• Our Father, as the snow has fallen gently over our fields, coming without our bidding, but to our great joy, so let thy spirit come to our waiting hearts. *Amen.*

—Mark Rich